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(Above) Staff Sgt. Tina Talamantes secures a flower hairclip in a girl's hair at the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage and School Oct. 13. Talamantes was one of six Manas Area Benefit Outreach Society Airmen who visited the orphanage to paint, deliver donations and play with the children. MABOS Airmen have donated more than 50,000 hours to Kyrgyz organizations and charities since 2003.

(Below) Staff Sgt. Tina Talamantes (left) and Senior Airman April Stinton paint a gazebo at the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage and School Oct. 13.



Hugs, handshakes, smiles

Children on a recess break eagerly greeted six Airmen from the Transit Center at Manas visiting the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage and School with hugs, handshakes and smiles Oct. 13.

The Airmen, part of the Manas Area Benefit Outreach Society, traveled to the school to paint a gazebo and playground equipment, deliver donations, and play with the children.

MABOS is a private organization established in 2003 as a means for Airmen deployed to the Transit Center to aid organizations and people in the areas surrounding the installation. The Nizhanchuisk Orphanage is one of two orphanages MABOS helps.

Senior Airman April Stinton is the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage primary focus group leader for MABOS. She has been to the orphanage five times.

"I'm responsible for organizing the trips and (fostering) the relationship between (MABOS) and the orphanage so we know what they need and what they would like to have done," said Stinton, a 376th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron patrolman.

If the orphanage children need school supplies, clothing, hygiene or other items, Stinton does her best to help coordinate a delivery. During her time working with the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage she has overseen the delivery of two washing machines, the collection of funds for stove plates, the donation of blankets and the completion of other small projects.

"We're trying to complete the small jobs right now while we wait on the bigger projects to go through (the approval process)," Stinton said.

When Stinton began helping at the orphanage, the children were on summer break. So the MABOS members spent their time painting the school and dormitory walls and floors.

"I think the most exciting part (of volunteering here) was being able to meet the kids," Stinton said. "I used to work with kids before I joined the military so they are very special to my heart. I can be having a bad day and when I walk in a classroom, that is gone because the kids just put a smile on my face."

Staff Sgt. Tina Talamantes, the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage alternate focus group leader, also has a soft spot in her heart for children. This was her second trip to the orphanage. She wanted to bring gifts, so she bought flower hairclips for the girls and bouncy balls for the boys.

"I just wanted to do something nice for them because I know the simple stuff makes them smile," said Talamantes, a 376th ESFS patrolman. "Today was actually my first time meeting the kids so just seeing their faces and how excited they got put a smile on my face."

The time and effort MABOS Airmen have put into helping the orphanage and the children has not gone unnoticed.

"As many times as you come, our children are still excited like to see you -- just like the first time that you came," said the Nizhanchuisk Orphanage director.

Before the Airmen left the orphanage, all the children in unison yelled out, "Thank you!"

Transit Center hosts Kyrgyz 'Transparency Council'

Members of the 13-person Council on Ensuring Transparency of Financial Activity of the Transit Center of Manas International Airport visited here Nov. 17.

During the visit, the group received an overview briefing about the Transit Center's missions that support international efforts in Afghanistan -- air refueling, movement of cargo and troops, and partnership activities between the U.S. and Kyrgyz Republic. They also received a tour of the Transit Center to see the mission firsthand and had the opportunity to ask questions.

The Transit Center's economic impact to Kyrgyzstan, through lease payments, contracts with local firms, humanitarian assistance and other areas, was \$151 million in fiscal 2011.

The Transparency Council was created Sept. 13 by Kyrgyz Republic President Roza Otunbayeva to monitor how payments for the use of the Transit Center are handled. The oversight group is charged with publishing an annual report and holding public hearings on oversight-related issues.

"The visit, and the council itself, provide a great opportunity for the Transit Center and the Kyrgyz Republic to continue working side-by-side to ensure transparency in our activities here," said Transit Center Director Col. James Jacobson. "I look forward to future cooperation between us."

Officials from the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek also attended the visit.

"We support budget transparency in Kyrgyzstan and



Members of the 13-person Council on Ensuring Transparency of Financial Activity of the Transit Center of Manas International Airport visited here Nov. 17.

want to see that the money the U.S. government pays in relation to the Transit Center benefits the people of Kyrgyzstan," said David McCormick, U.S. Embassy Political/Economic Chief.

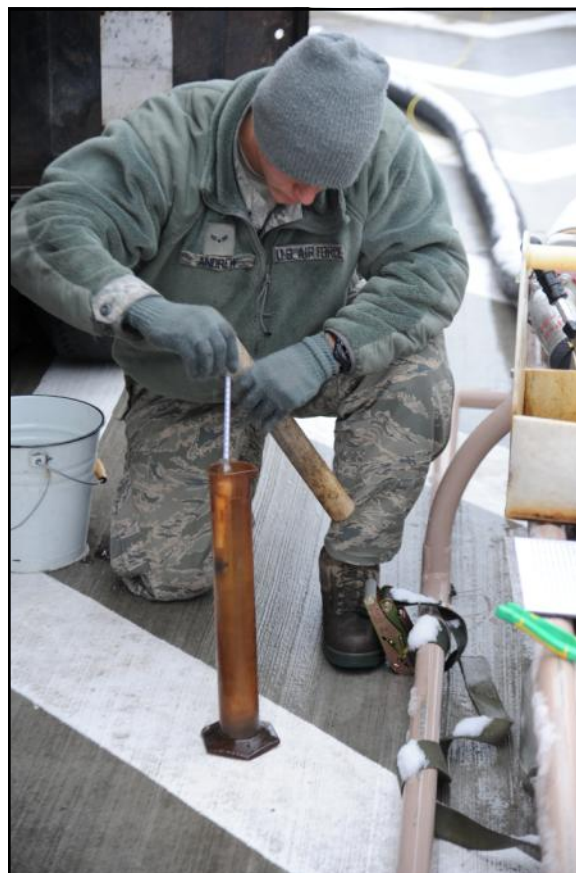
The Transit Center at Manas was activated in December 2001 and provides approximately 30 percent of all aerial refueling for aircraft participating in international efforts for Operation Enduring Freedom, and is the premier mobility and logistics hub for coalition troops and cargo into and out of Afghanistan. About 1,500 U.S. military and civilian employees, and 700 Kyrgyz citizens work at the Center.



Kyrgyz entity delivers fuel to TC

(Above) Airman 1st Class Eian Andrew takes a receipt accepting delivery of the first Gazpromneft-Aero Kyrgyzstan shipment of fuel to the Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyzstan, Nov. 19. Under the fuel contract, the Transit Center will receive up to 90 percent of its aviation fuel from GAK.

(Right) Airman 1st Class Eian Andrew tests a fuel sample prior to accepting delivery of the first Gazpromneft-Aero Kyrgyzstan shipment of fuel to the Transit Center at Manas Nov. 19. The contract was announced Sept. 27.





(Above) Staff Sgt. Matt Leatherman (tan suit) helps a Kyrgyz Republic soldier and fellow explosive ordnance disposal technician place an X-ray machine by a potential bomb during an exercise. Emergency responders from the Kyrgyz Ministries of Emergency Services, Interior and Defense participated in a joint explosive ordnance disposal and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosives response exercise here with their American counterparts.



(Above) Kyrgyz Republic Lt. Col. Azamat Kurmanaliev examines an explosive ordnance display during an information exchange at the Transit Center at Manas Nov. 22.

US, Kyrgyz officials participate in joint EOD, CBRNE exercise

Emergency responders from the Kyrgyz Ministries of Emergency Services, Interior and Defense participated in a joint explosive ordnance disposal and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosives response exercise here with their American counterparts Nov. 22.

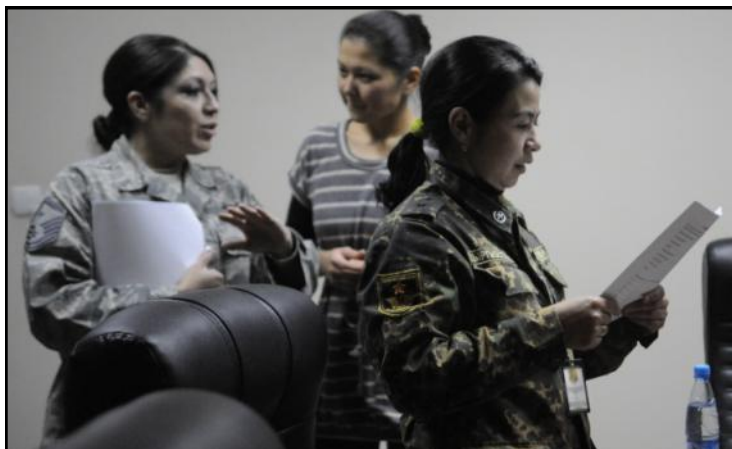
The exercise was part of a continuing partnership information exchange program that familiarizes Kyrgyz experts with Air Force CBRNE and EOD tactics, techniques and procedures.

For the scenario, the joint CBRNE and EOD teams were sent to clear an apartment that intelligence reports indicated was being used by an extremist cell to make

dirty bombs. The EOD teams entered the apartment with a robot to check for explosive devices and to test the room for radioactive materials. They then sent a team in with equipment to X-ray a suspicious package.

Kyrgyz Republic Lt. Col. Azamat Kurmanaliev, an MOD senior civil engineer with an EOD background, feels these exchanges are very beneficial. Kurmanaliev studied EOD with the Russian military.

"I came here and saw there were similarities and differences in the way that you do things than how I was taught," he said. "So I took some of these elements and have implemented them into our training program. That is why exchanges like this are so important."



US Airmen share PME format with Kyrgyz Republic soldiers

Soldiers from the Koi Tash NCO Academy and Airmen from the Transit Center at Manas met for a professional military education exchange here Nov. 10. The event centered on the Airman Leadership School methods of course delivery and the four primary curriculum topics of expeditionary Airmen, supervisor of Airmen, military professionalism and supervisor communications.

Kyrgyz Republic Chief Warrant Officer Ayzada Shamirkanova reads a communications exercise out loud during an enlisted professional military education instructor exchange Nov. 10. Shamirkanova is an instructor at the Koi Tash NCO Academy.



Kyrgyz Republic Lt. Col. Natalie Balavrikova follows Agat as he sniffs for explosives during a detection exercise at the Transit Center at Manas Nov. 15. Balavrikova and Agat, a 3-year old Belgian Malinois, work for the National Security Service of Kyrgyzstan.



Kyrgyz Republic Lt. Col. Natalie Balavrikova leads Agat through an explosives detection exercise here Nov. 15.

K-9 teams train together

After three years of working with the National Security Service of Kyrgyzstan working dog program, a 376th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog trainer is preparing to return to the States.

Joe Villalobos has been part of the program since he arrived at the Transit Center at Manas, in 2008. He assisted the NSS in selecting most of their working dogs as puppies for the program and helped those dogs grow into skilled professionals.

The program began five years ago when the NSS asked the Transit Center MWD instructor for help in starting a working dog program. The NSS provides security for the Kyrgyz Republic president and other high-level dignitaries.

"Since we are subject matter experts and have been doing this for so long, they came to us for guidance," said Villalobos, a native of Sanger, Calif.

Kyrgyz Republic Lt. Col. Natalie Balavrikova has been part of the program since the beginning.

Initially the program started with two dogs and today there are eight, Balavrikova said.

The Kyrgyz Republic does not have a K-9 academy.

"We did not have any programs or trainers who would help and assist us in training our dogs for detection," Balavrikova said. "That is why we are very grateful this program started and it has kept going. This is a very big asset for us to have these puppies trained by experts in order to prevent terrorist attacks in our republic."

Dog handlers from the two organizations train twice a week.

"It is always a learning experience for both parties anytime you get a group of K-9 handlers together," Villalobos said. "There are always experiences others have had that they can teach to the group. We can learn from their experiences, and they can learn from our experiences. The goal is to keep advancing the dog teams."



Staff Sgt. Mary Boyer and her military working dog, Tomy, check a vehicle for explosives during an exercise at the Transit Center at Manas Nov. 15. Twice a week, dog handlers from the 376th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and the Kyrgyz Republic run through various scenarios to help maintain their dogs' proficiency levels.

In the community



Master Sgt. Jermaine Tate (upper left) watches as children color at the Children's Heart Ward of the Kyrgyz Scientific Research Institute of Heart Surgery and Organ Transplantation in Bishkek Nov. 11. Tate is a member of the Manas Area Benefit Outreach Society, which MABOS helped replace windows in the heart ward and has donated funds for children's surgeries. MABOS is private organization providing charitable donations, goods and services to people and organizations in the areas surrounding the Transit Center at Manas.



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Steven Thompson (left) poses for a photo with Pastor Anton Berdnikov (center) after a service at the Transit Center at Manas Oct. 27. Berdnikov, a pastor in Bishkek, conducted two services at the Transit Center earlier in the day at the invitation of Thompson. Earlier in the month, Thompson gave a sermon at the Bishkek church.



Airman 1st Class Darrin Zabinski plays the keyboard as students at the Kurenkeyev College of Music sing during a music exchange in Bishkek Oct. 26. Airmen deployed to the Transit Center at Manas traveled to the school to perform for the students and to watch the students showcase their talents.



Vera Volf shares photos with Army Spc. Jayna Marks-Rench and Tech. Sgt. Timothy Dahnke during a lunch with three Babushkas in Bishkek Oct. 25. Members of the Manas Area Benefit Outreach Society travel to Bishkek twice a month to spend time with the ladies.



Army Sgt. Joshua Deiss prepares to block a goal during a soccer game against Kyrgyz Republic airmen at Frunze 1 Air Base Oct. 18.

Transit Center at Manas economic impact as of Dec. 1, 2011

Direct Expenditures	FY09 Actual	FY10 Actual	FY11 Actual	FY12 YTD
Payments to Kyrgyz Govt - Dip Note	\$26,620,000	\$60,000,000	\$60,000,000	\$15,000,000
Payments to Manas International Airport	\$22,999,039			
Lease, Passes, and Utilities		\$4,029,091	\$7,817,140	\$2,051,469
Aircraft Landing, Parking, Service Fees		\$21,157,571	\$19,460,590	\$1,396,882
Contributions to Airport Improvements	\$30,600,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,522,021
Contributions to Kyrgyz Aeronavigation	\$0	\$0	\$30,000,000	\$0
Contract Payments	\$24,601,908	\$42,790,517	\$30,916,871	\$4,321,476
(Furniture, Sports Equipment, Parts, Supplies, Buildings, Renovations, Road Repairs, Grounds Maintenance, Refuse, Custodial, Vehicle Leases)				
Defense Logistics Agency Fuel Payments to Gazpromneft-Aero-Kyrgyzstan				\$6,800,000
Leases (non-MIA)	\$81,562	\$66,596	\$120,698	
Programmatic Humanitarian Assistance	\$1,700,000	\$2,273,488	\$823,634	\$264,226
Subtotal Direct Expenditures	\$106,602,509	\$130,317,263	\$149,138,933	\$31,356,074
Indirect Expenditures				
Estimated US Military local spending	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$1,427,396	\$368,469
Subtotal Indirect Expenditures	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$1,427,396	\$368,469
Total Economic Impact	\$107,640,039	\$131,479,006	\$150,566,329	\$31,724,543

Kyrgyz, US Women's Club shows similarities, creates friendships

It seems no matter the location, get a bunch of women together and they can always find something about which to talk. That's the idea — and the result — in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, when female American service members deployed to the Transit Center at Manas visit with Kyrgyz ladies during a weekly American Corners: Women's Club.

The Women's Club started from an idea of the deputy director of the Bayalinov Library, according to Robin Solomon, Public Diplomacy Outreach officer at the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek.

"(The director) told us that women in Bishkek were eager to speak directly with American women about their professional, personal and family experiences," Solomon said. "The success of the Women's Club confirms this, and it is an excellent example of the power of people-to-people diplomacy, which the American Corners program was designed to promote."

The "American Corners" program was launched in Kyrgyzstan in 2003 as a partnership between the U.S. Embassy Bishkek and local institutions. An American Corner is an information resource center modeled in the American style with the purpose of providing comprehensive and up-to-date information about the United States, and thus promoting mutual understanding between American and Kyrgyz people.

The unique aspect of really getting into the culture is what initially drew 1st Lt. Tahina Montoya to participate. She's been twice and loved the experience.

"My favorite part is developing friendships and gaining



Service members deployed to the Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyzstan, pose for a group photo with their new Kyrgyz friends during an American Corners: Women's Club meeting Oct. 14 in Bishkek. The American Corners program launched in this country in 2003 program promotes mutual understanding between American and Kyrgyz people.

their trust," Montoya said. "Once they're comfortable, they open up and talk about interesting traditions and practices ... and how they feel about those traditions. These are things we won't learn from inside the Transit Center or by reading any book."

Despite differences in some traditions, discovered they have more in common than they first might have guessed.